

MARVEL

ISSUE

20



RESERVATION



JOHNSON

ULTIMATE COMICS™

X-MEN®

WOOD • BARBERI • VLASCO • ABURTOV

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**LIVING IN A WORLD
WHERE MUTANTS ARE
HATED AND FEARED MORE
THAN EVER, ONE GROUP
OF YOUNG HEROES HAS
BANDED TOGETHER TO
FIGHT BACK.**

ULTIMATE COMICS **X-MEN**



PREVIOUSLY:

With a crippled country undergoing reconstruction, the mutant population still struggles to find its place in society. President Captain America offered the community two options: the “cure” that erased the mutant gene or a plot of land for those who chose to keep their powers. Thousands took the cure. Now only twenty mutants remain.

As these twenty struggle to forge a new community, rivalries have begun to form. Militant-minded Mach Two made an unsuccessful bid for leadership over Kitty Pryde. And while she lost that battle, she is far from defeated. However, Mach Two’s not the only one hatching a plan. Karen Grant, mistress of the Southeast Asian Republic, has been secretly monitoring the new mutant nation.

Do the X-Men stand a chance when they have so many enemies amongst themselves?

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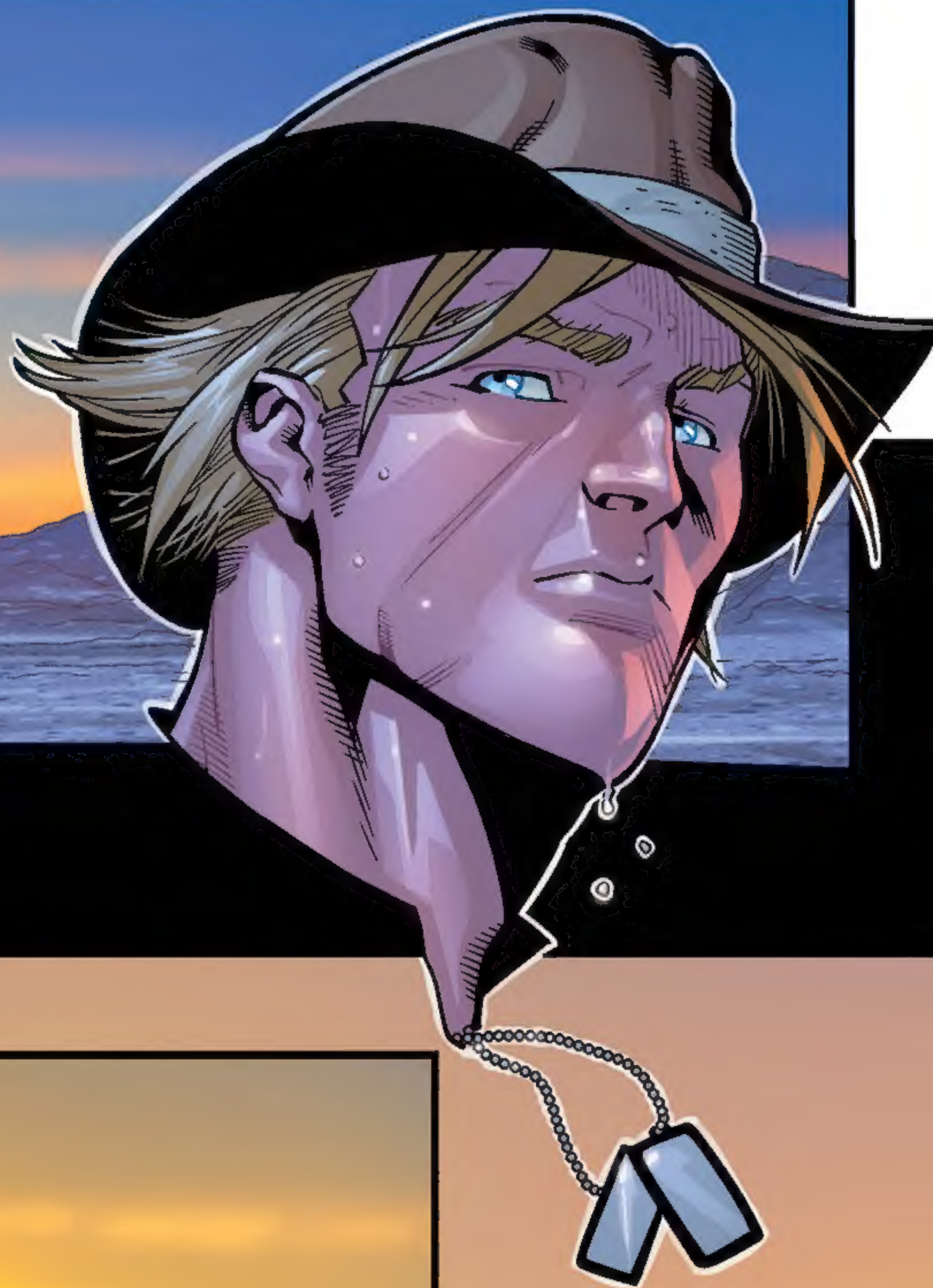
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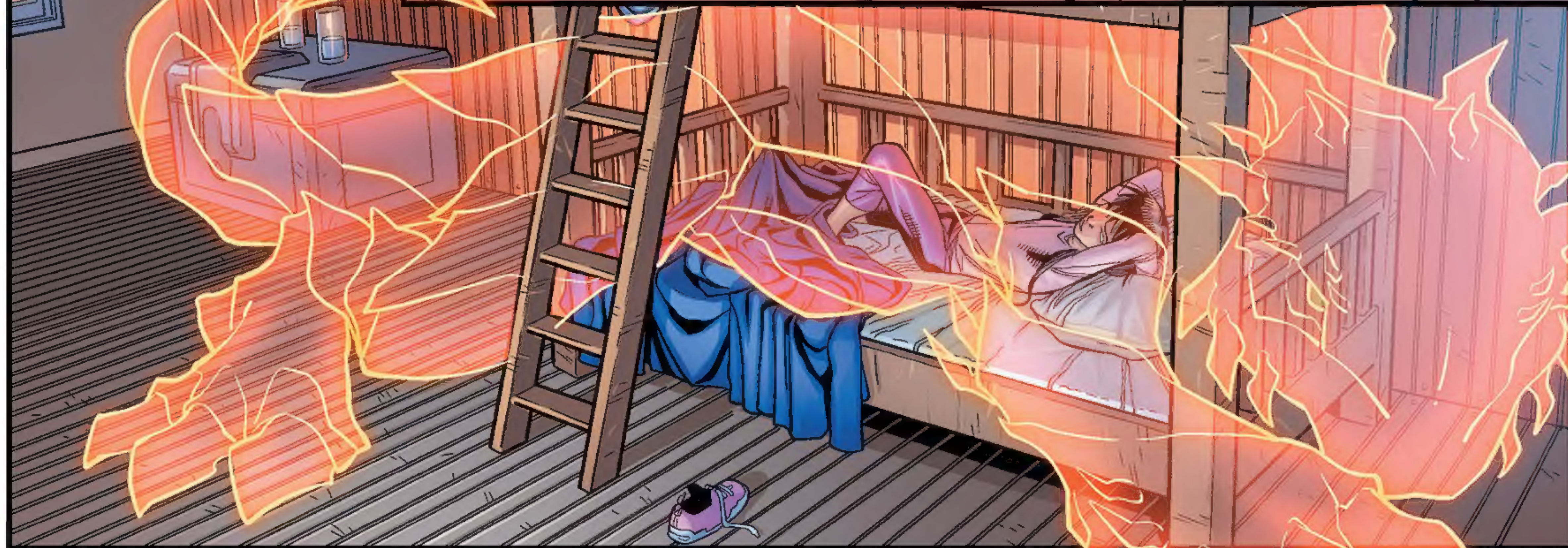
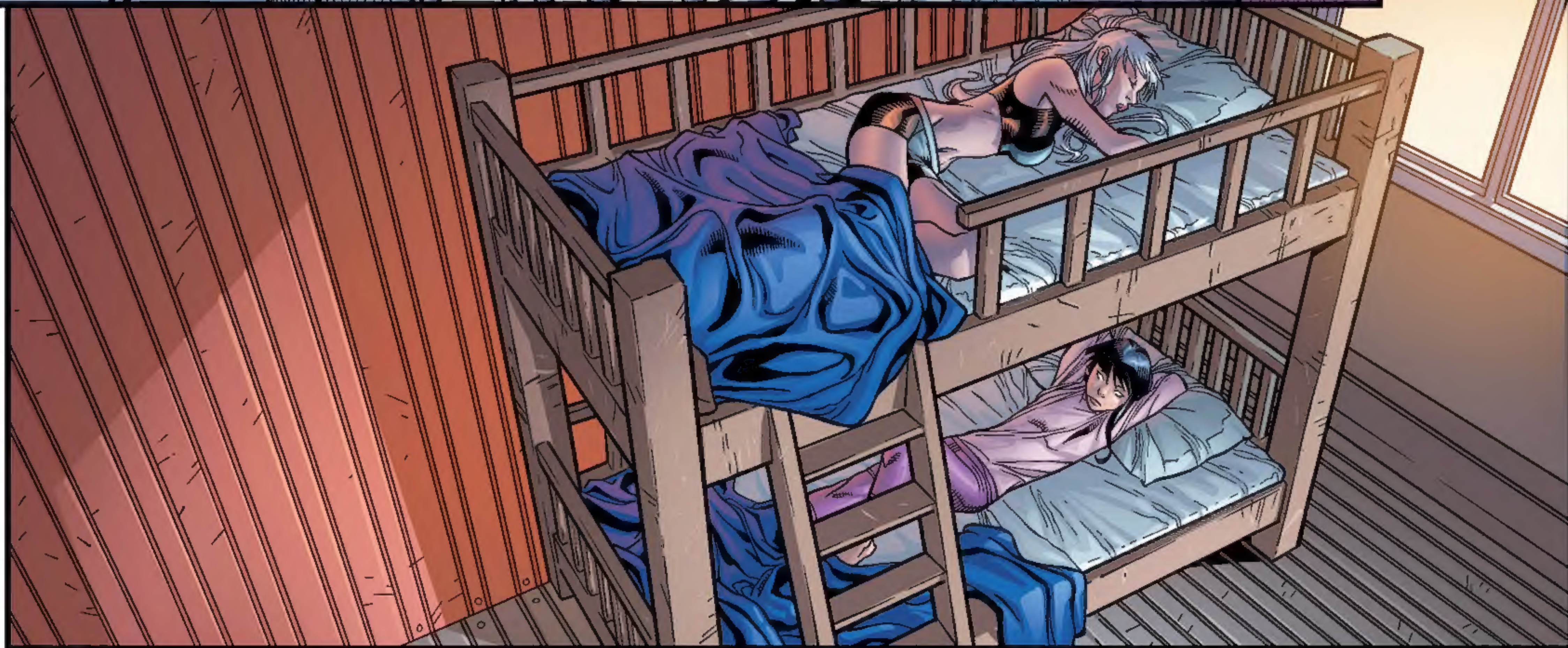
UTOPIA.



JIMMY HUDSON.



THE SETTLEMENT.



AMARA aka MAGMA.

Nothing!

HISAKO aka ARMOR.

MARIAN CARLYLE
aka ROGUE.

You sleep
okay?

Yeah...

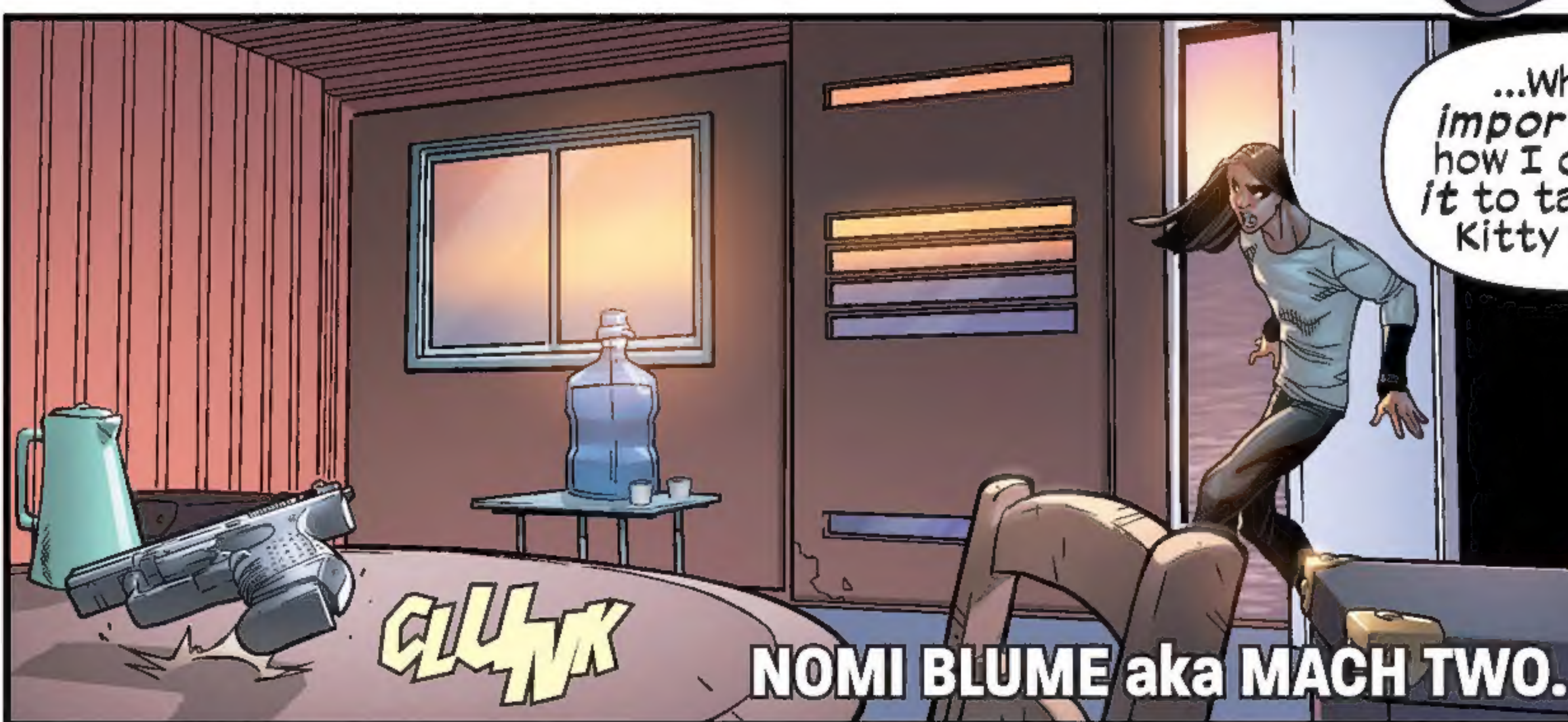
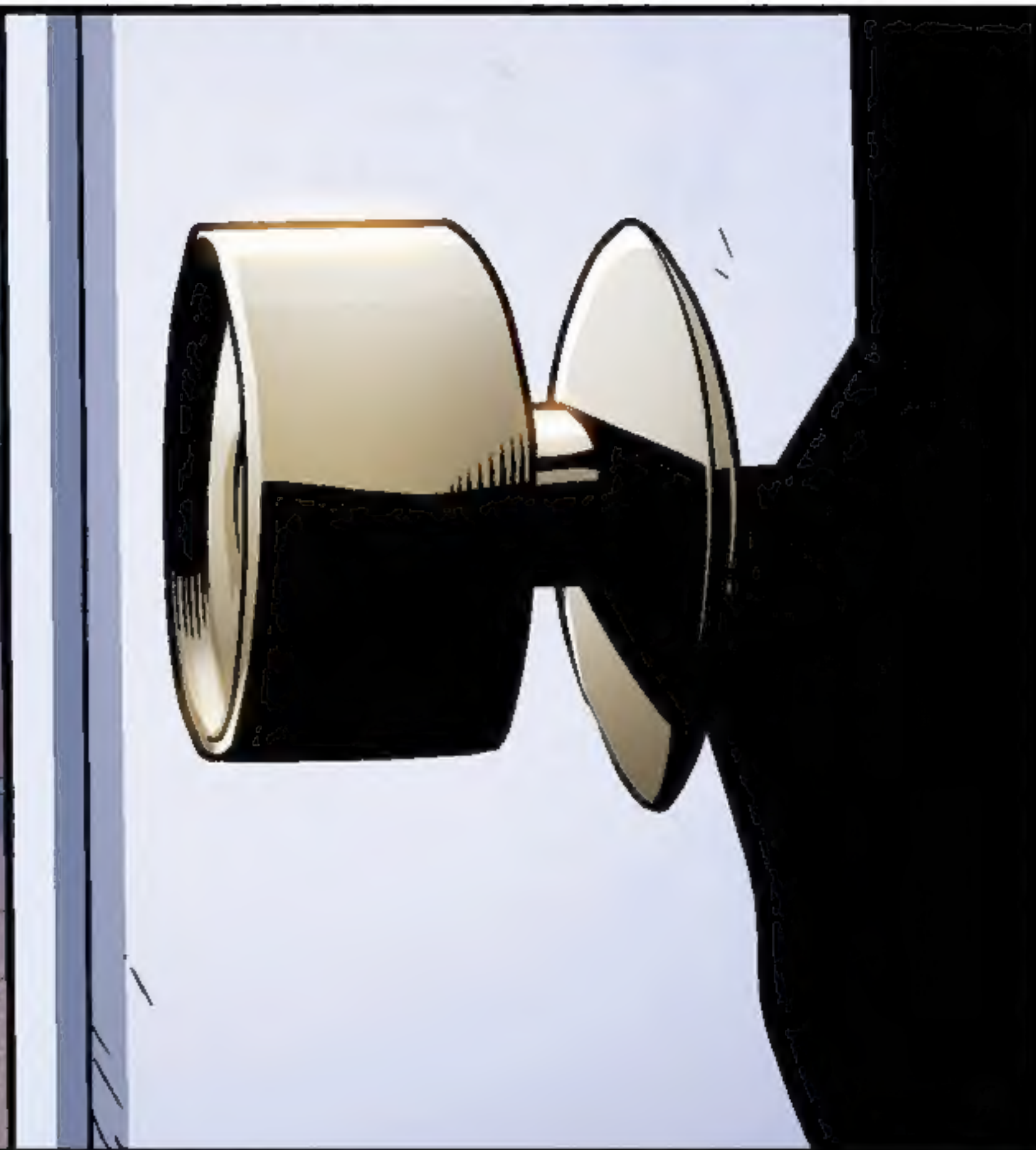
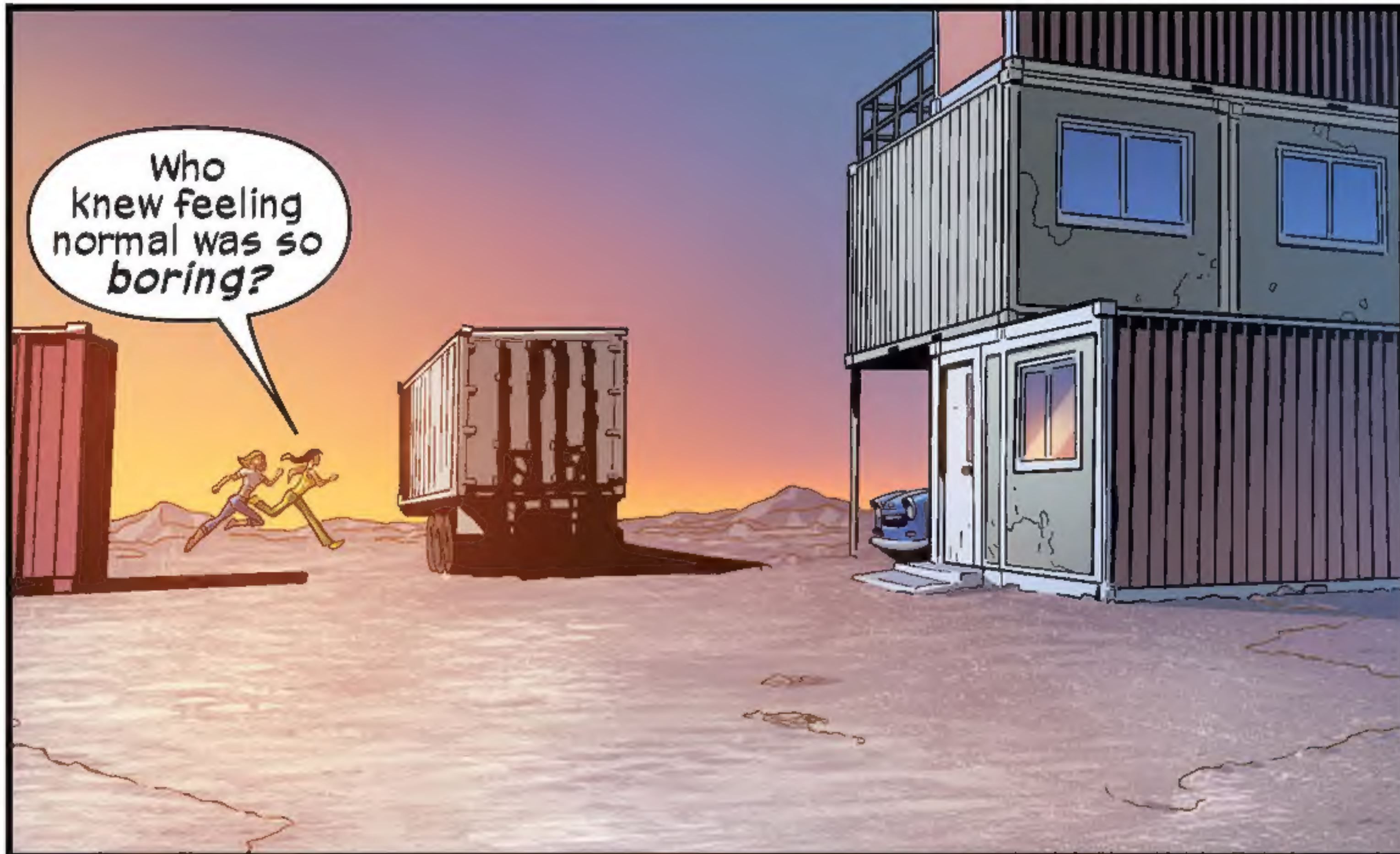
Fine.
You?

KITTY PRYDE.

...More
or less.

You
wanna talk
about it?

Not really.
There's not
much to say.



THE FIRST MUTANT NATION SETTLEMENT.
aka "UTOPIA."



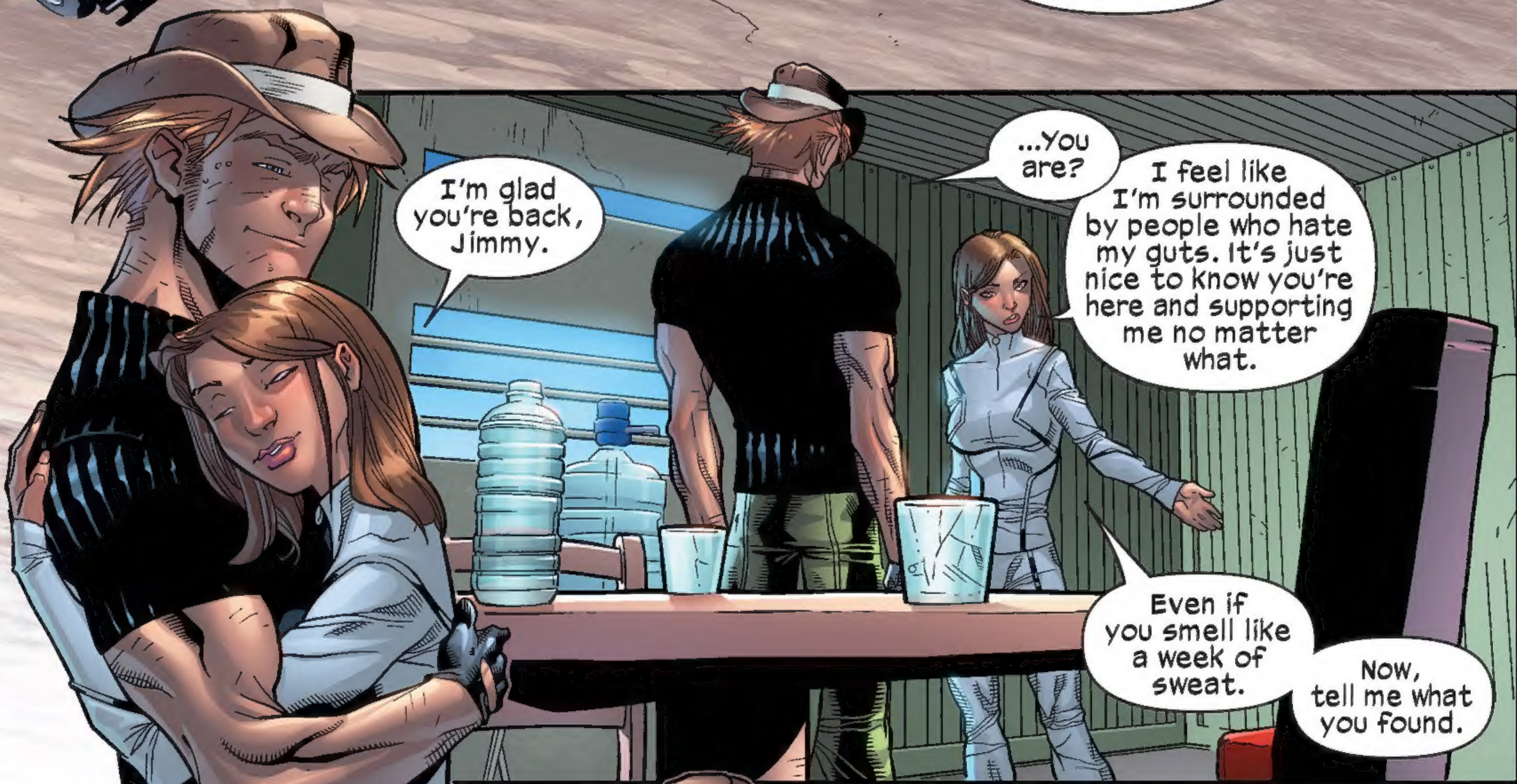
RESERVATION X PART TWO

WOOD/BARBERI/VLASCO/ABURTOV



Were you
seen coming
in?

Hard to
say. I've spent
the last eight
days in the desert.
I got used to
being alone.



I'm glad
you're back,
Jimmy.

...You
are?

I feel like
I'm surrounded
by people who hate
my guts. It's just
nice to know you're
here and supporting
me no matter
what.

Even if
you smell like
a week of
sweat.

Now,
tell me what
you found.



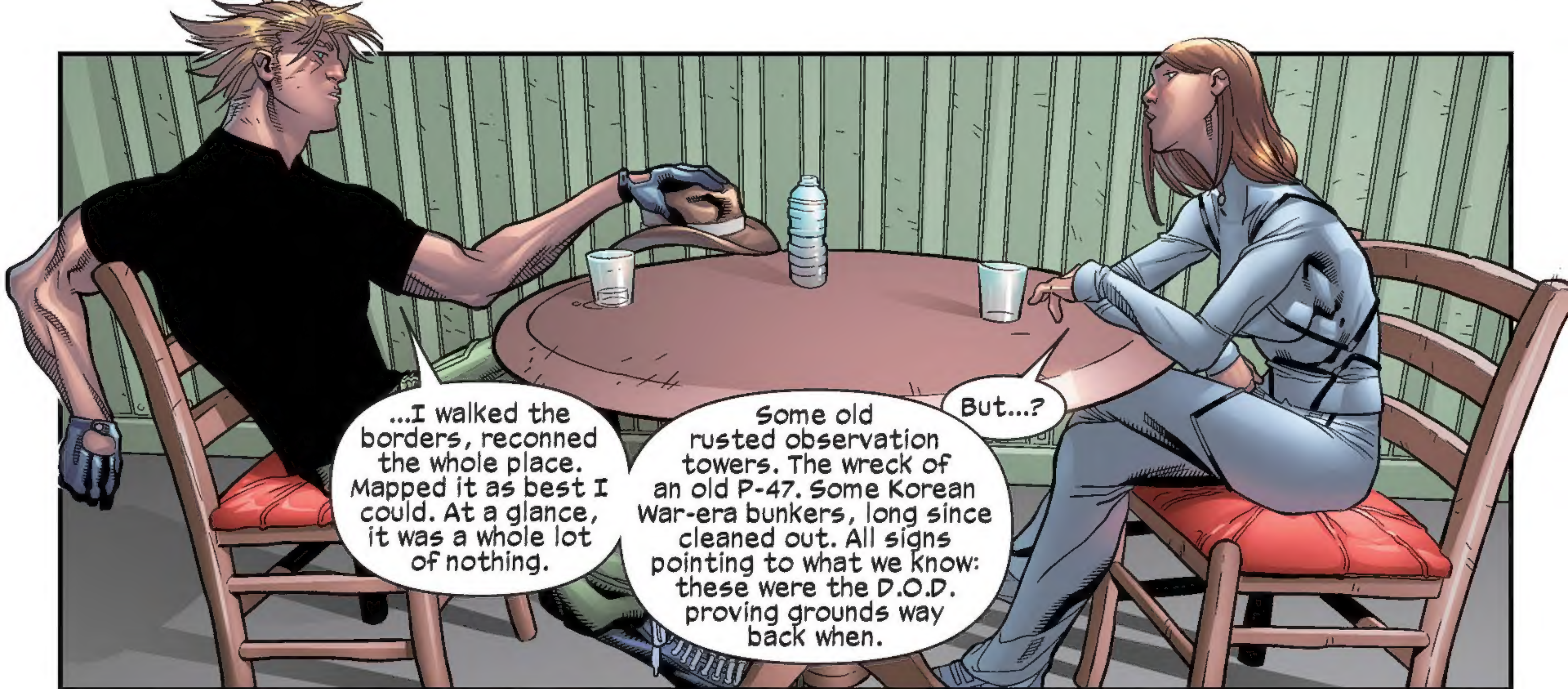
Well, the
first two nights
I was security for
Zero as he took
soil samples. We
covered a five-mile
radius around
the camp.

He said
the samples
tested fine. Some
toxins, but nothing
he can't screen
out.

Then
keep everyone
within those
five miles.



'Cuz after
I started my
solo recon...



...I walked the borders, reconned the whole place. Mapped it as best I could. At a glance, it was a whole lot of nothing.

Some old rusted observation towers. The wreck of an old P-47. Some Korean War-era bunkers, long since cleaned out. All signs pointing to what we know: these were the D.O.D. proving grounds way back when.

But...?

Nothing's alive. I mean that. No foliage to speak of. A few ragged lizards here and there. No birds in the sky, no insects at night.

Then one night, I was walking along and my boots started *melting*.

...What?

Radiation, probably. Zero could confirm, but I wouldn't ask that of anyone. I literally ran the other way for at least a mile.

Are you okay?

I think so. I had a Geiger counter in my pack, and I think I isolated the hot area. It's sizeable, maybe twenty percent of the reservation, and the readings are *off the charts*. I'm thinking a spent fuel dump, something big like that.

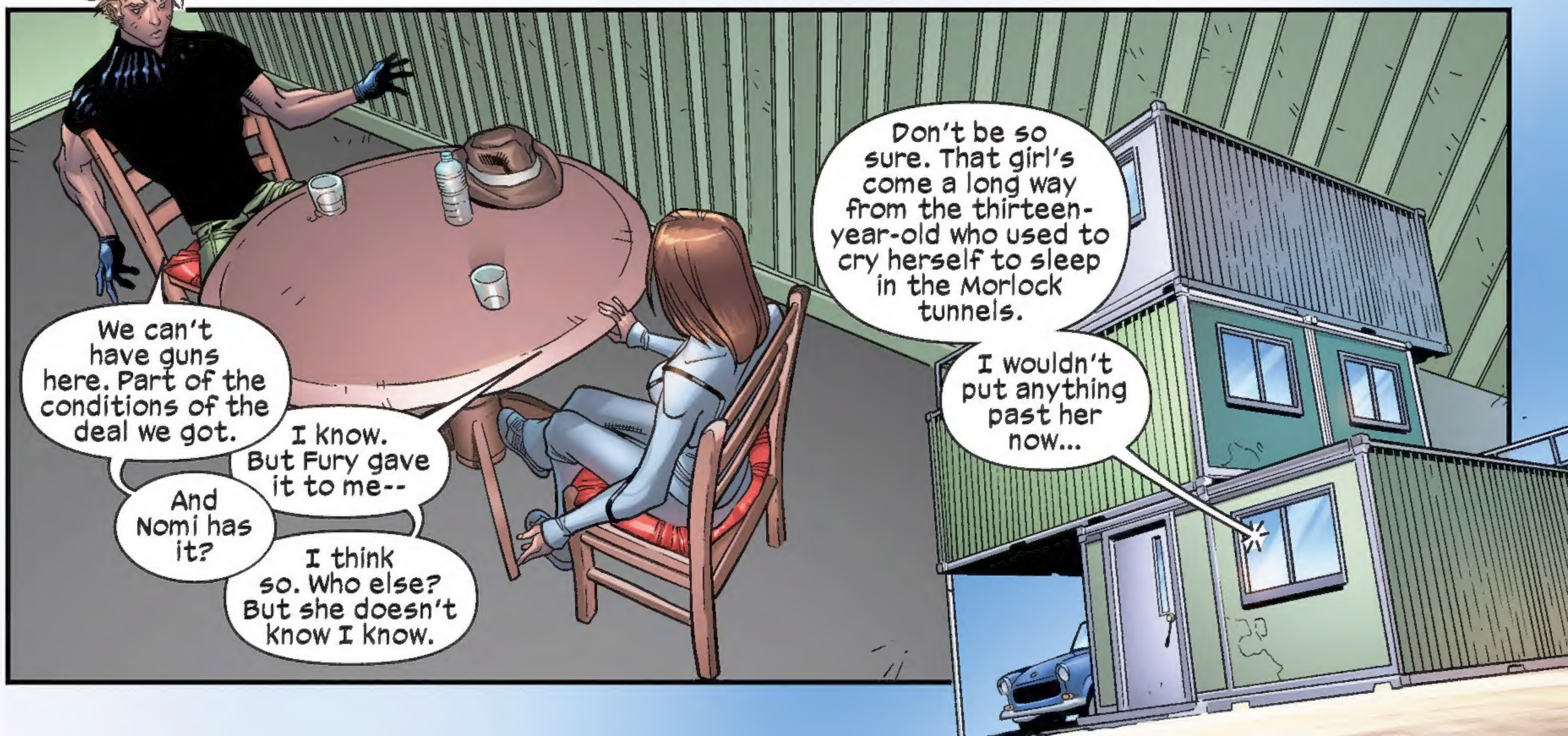
Nomi was right, Kitty, they gave us a *bad deal*.

And if word gets out? People are going to think maybe you're keeping things from them.

She stole my gun.

What gun...?

A handgun, a gift from Fury. It's a keepsake, a thing in a box.



We can't have guns here. Part of the conditions of the deal we got.

And Nomi has it?

I know. But Fury gave it to me--

I think so. Who else? But she doesn't know I know.

Don't be so sure. That girl's come a long way from the thirteen-year-old who used to cry herself to sleep in the Morlock tunnels.

I wouldn't put anything past her now...

LATER.

I don't know what to tell you, Sam...

ORORO MUNROE
aka STORM.

...I can't work with what's not here. Maybe, *maybe*, I can divert some precipitation from Yosemite, but they're dry as a bone too--

Never you mind. Come back in here.

I know you're doing what you can.

Which is a whole lot of *nothing*...

SAM SMITHERS
aka BLACKHEATH.

...I just want to pull my weight.

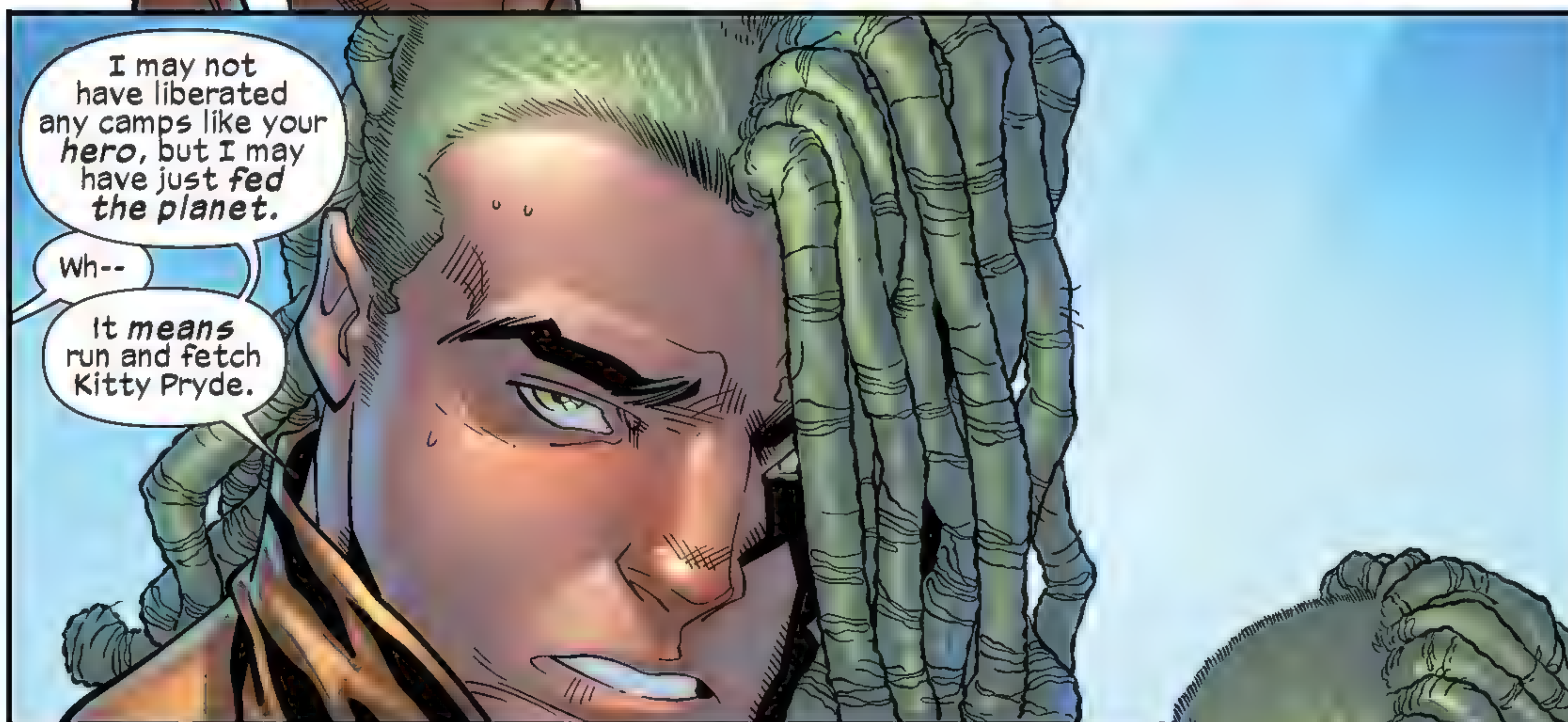
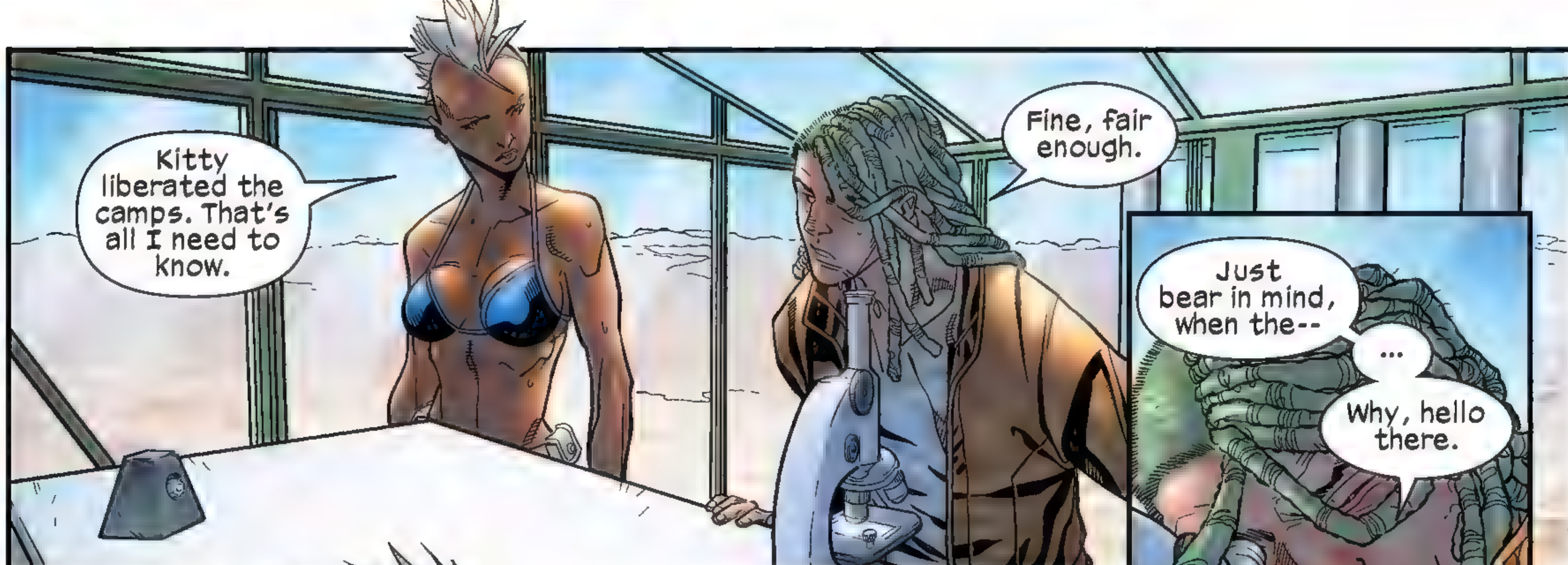
You'll find a way.

Tell me, Ororo...

...you really think Kitty Pryde is up to the task of running this whole endeavor?

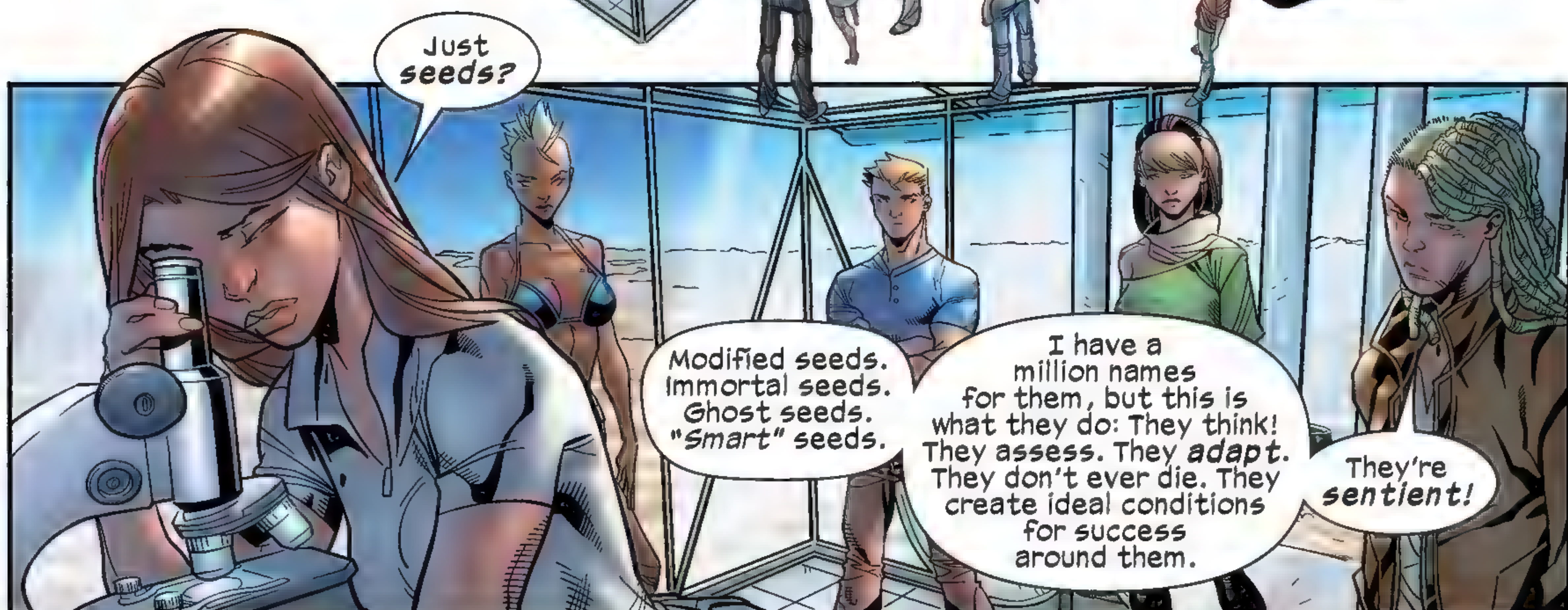
...

Uh-uh, Sam, don't you try and recruit me. Mach Two and her friends give me the *major* creeps.





...So what
am I looking
at?

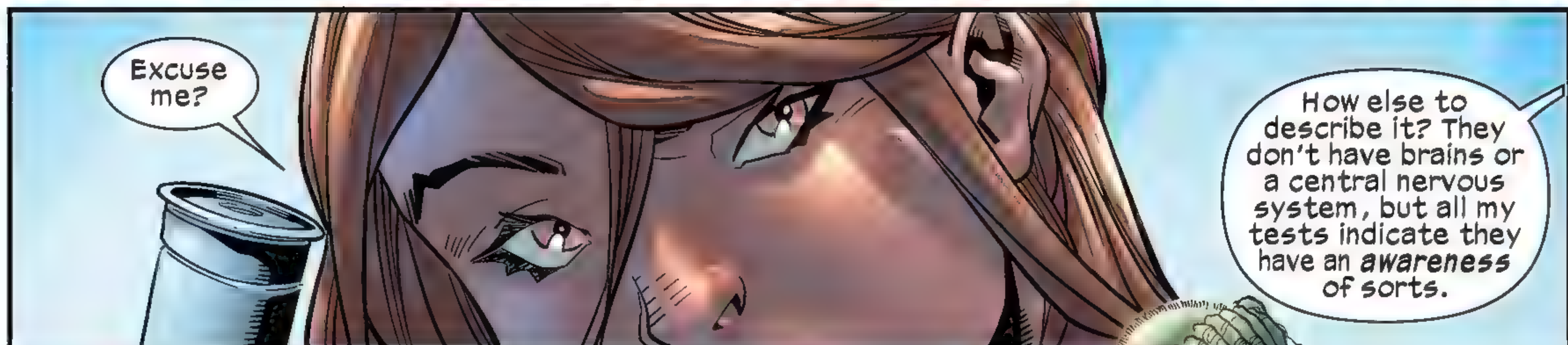


Just
seeds?

Modified seeds.
Immortal seeds.
Ghost seeds.
"Smart" seeds.

I have a
million names
for them, but this is
what they do: They think!
They assess. They *adapt*.
They don't ever die. They
create ideal conditions
for success
around them.

They're
sentient!



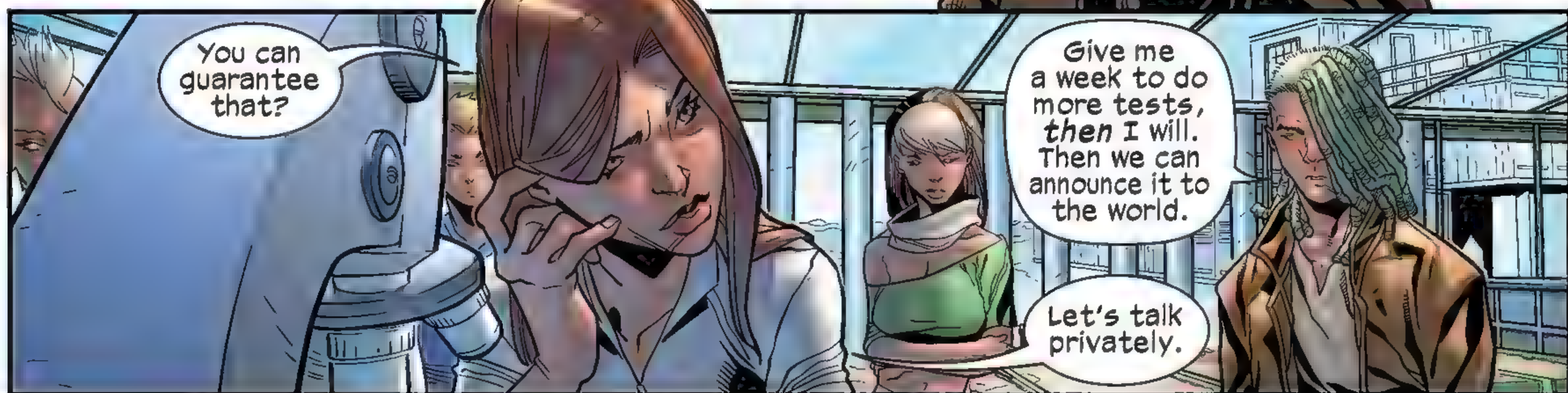
Excuse
me?

How else to
describe it? They
don't have brains or
a central nervous
system, but all my
tests indicate they
have an *awareness*
of sorts.



They do little
terraformations,
if not on the soil
around them, then on
themselves. They
adapt so they
can thrive.

Drop these
anywhere on
the earth, Kitty,
any Godforsaken
blighted landscape,
and these buggers
will *grow*.



You can
guarantee
that?

Give me
a week to do
more tests,
then I will.
Then we can
announce it to
the world.

Let's talk
privately.

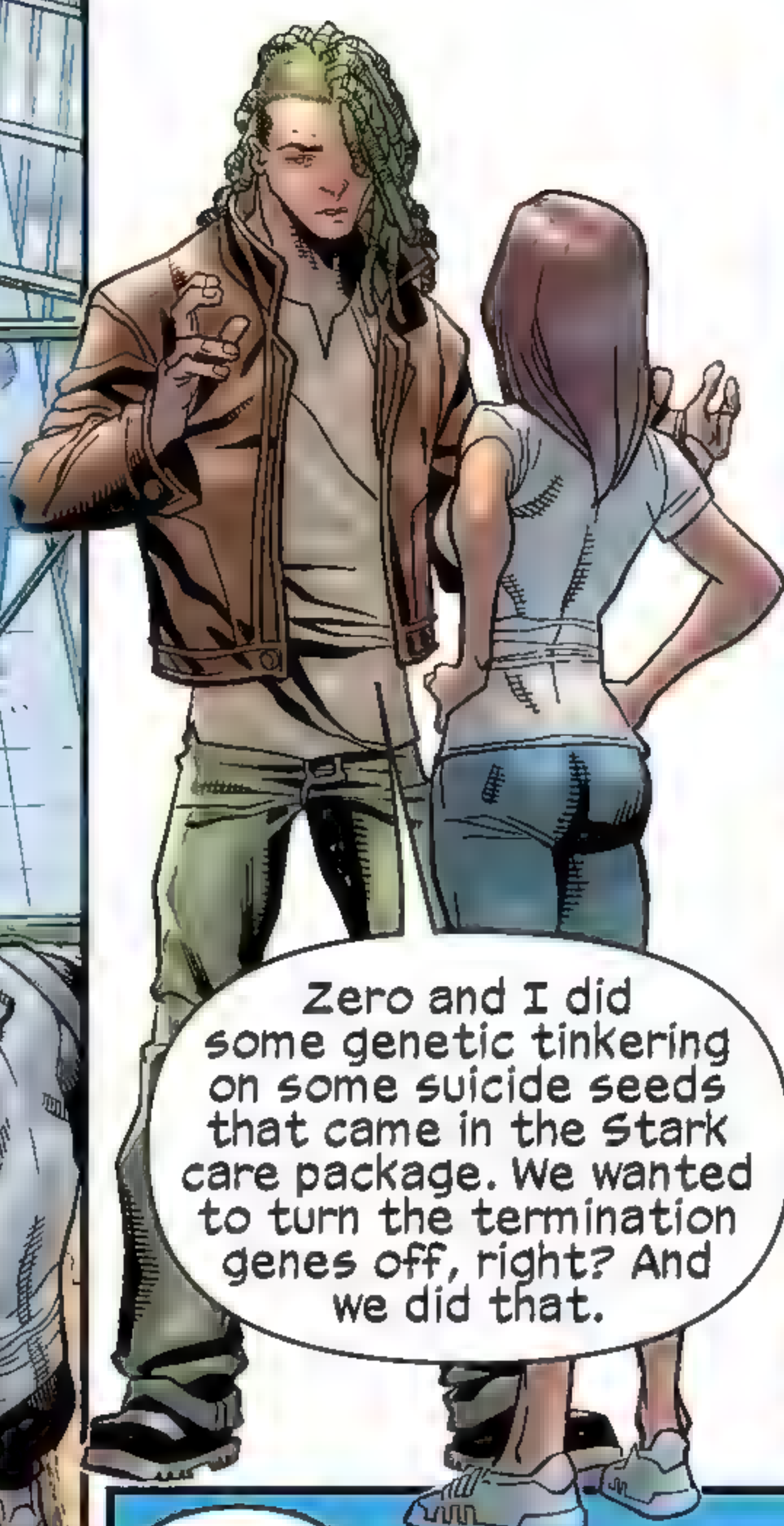


A little discretion, Sam...

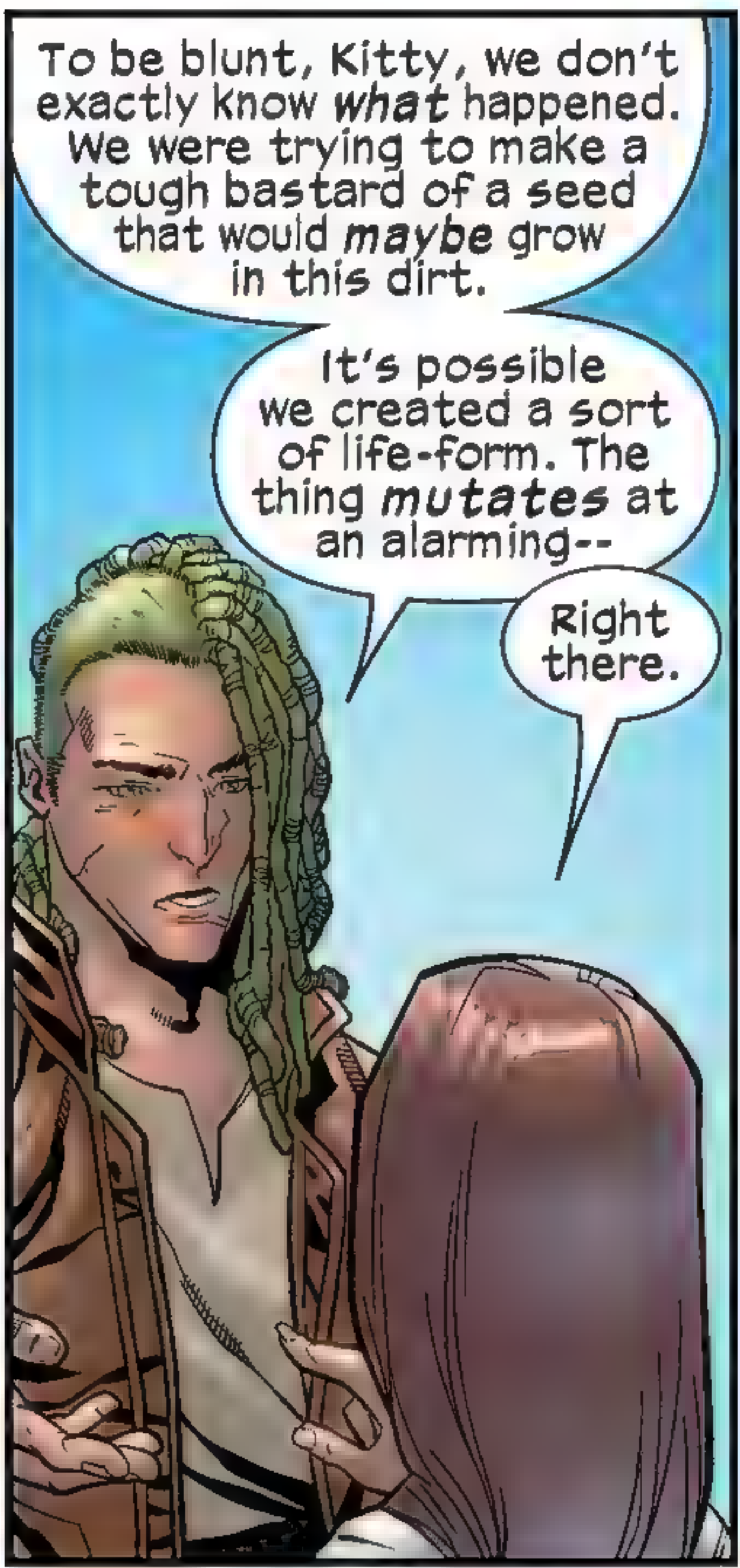
What on earth are you on about? We just invented something that will literally **change the planet**.

Tell me how you invented it.

We needed to encourage growth. Zero had "cleaned" a bit of soil, removed contaminants and the like. Storm sucked whatever ambient moisture this wasteland has in its air and we created a biosphere of sorts in the greenhouse.



Zero and I did some genetic tinkering on some suicide seeds that came in the Stark care package. We wanted to turn the termination genes off, right? And we did that.



To be blunt, Kitty, we don't exactly know *what* happened. We were trying to make a tough bastard of a seed that would *maybe* grow in this dirt.

It's possible we created a sort of life-form. The thing *mutates* at an alarming--

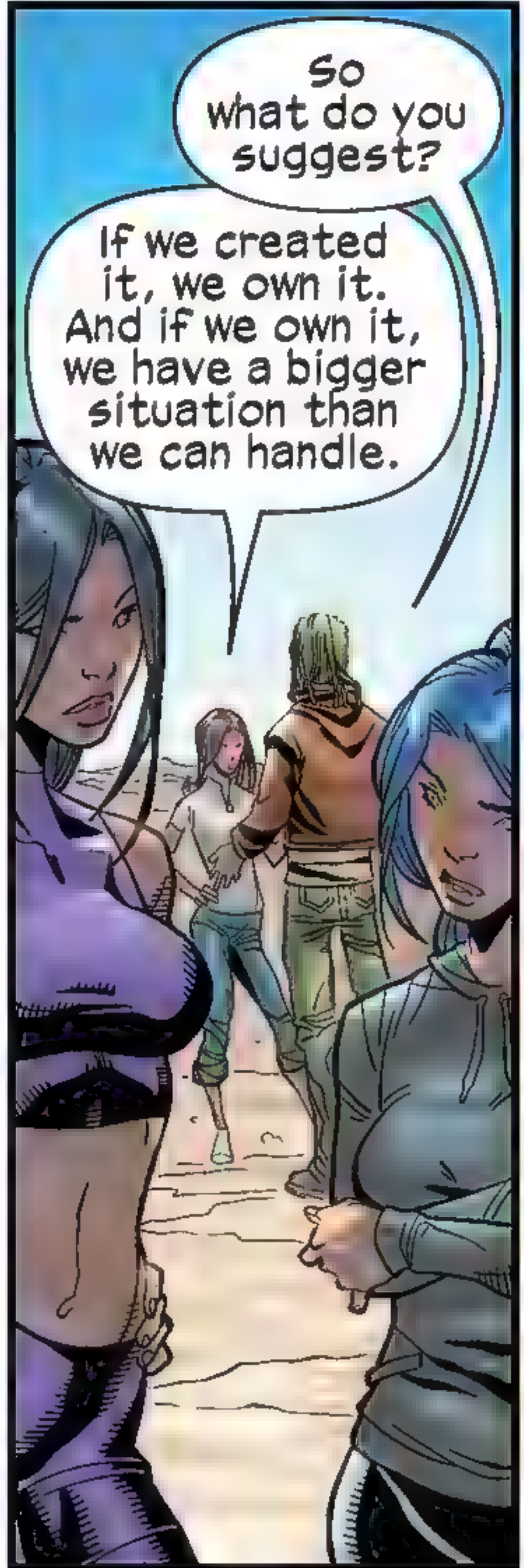
Right there.



What?

"**Mutates.**" That *word*. You want to tell the public that we invented some mutant seeds and here you are, go ahead and just sprinkle them around?

Do you *see*?



So what do you suggest?

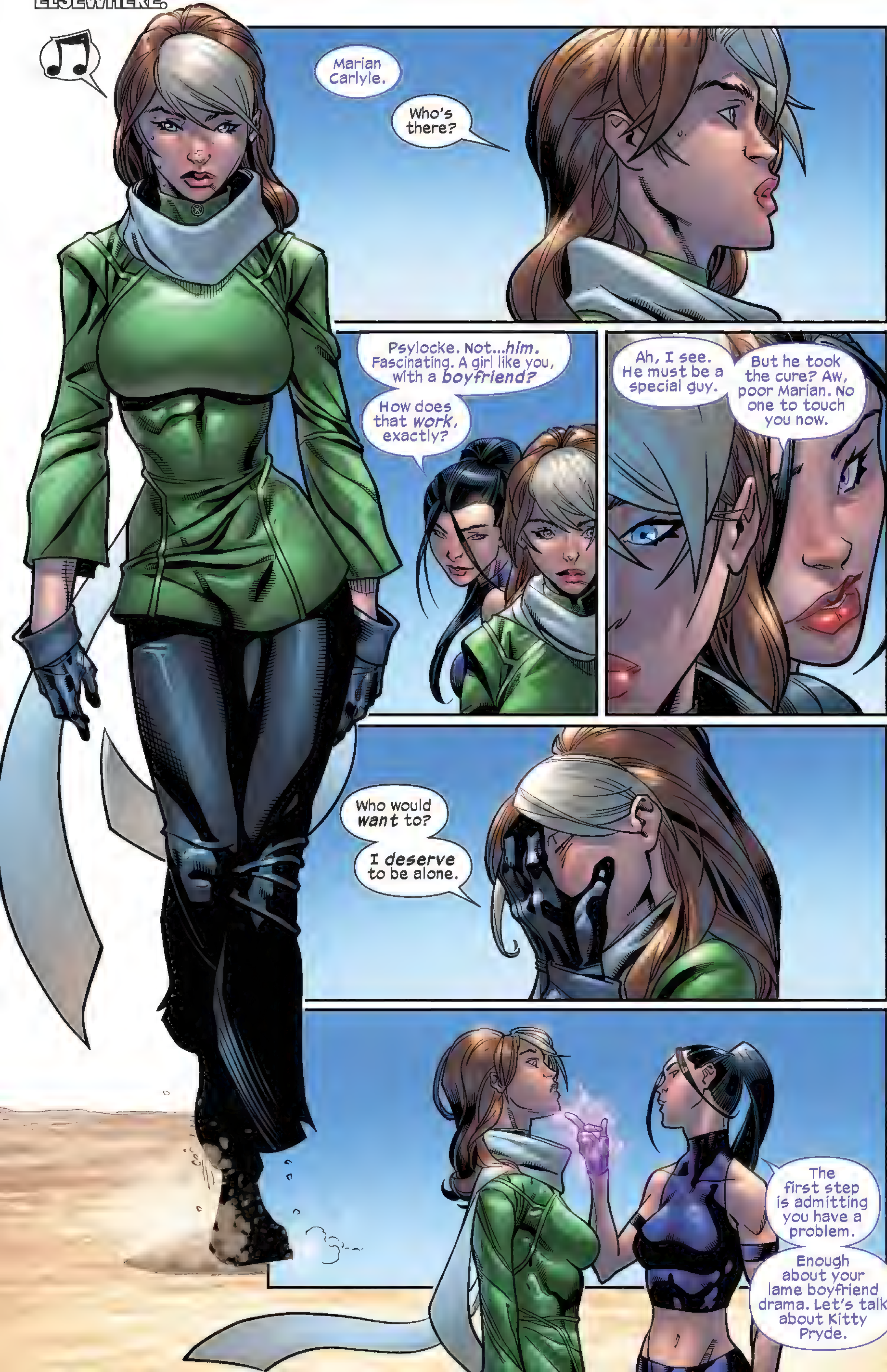
If we created it, we own it. And if we own it, we have a bigger situation than we can handle.



Do your tests, tell me what you come up with. I'll work on the business end of this.

I think I know who to call.

ELSEWHERE.



Marian Carlyle.

Who's there?

Psylocke. Not...him. Fascinating. A girl like you, with a *boyfriend*?

How does that *work*, exactly?

Ah, I see. He must be a special guy.

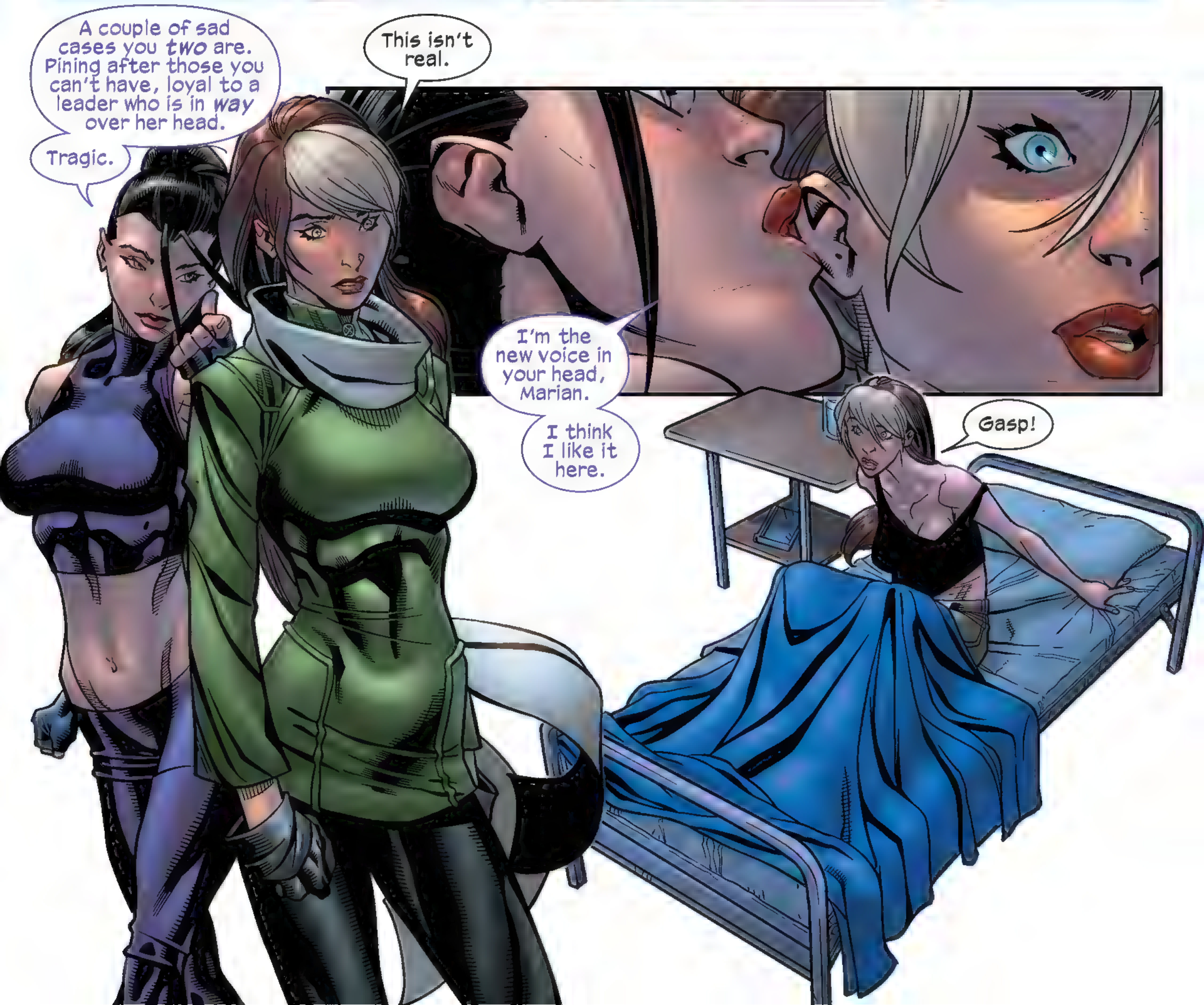
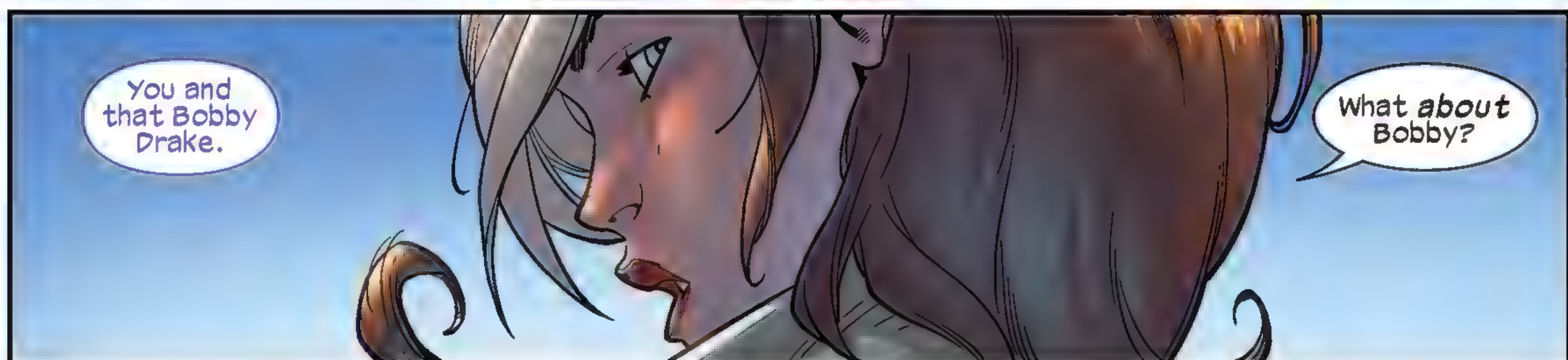
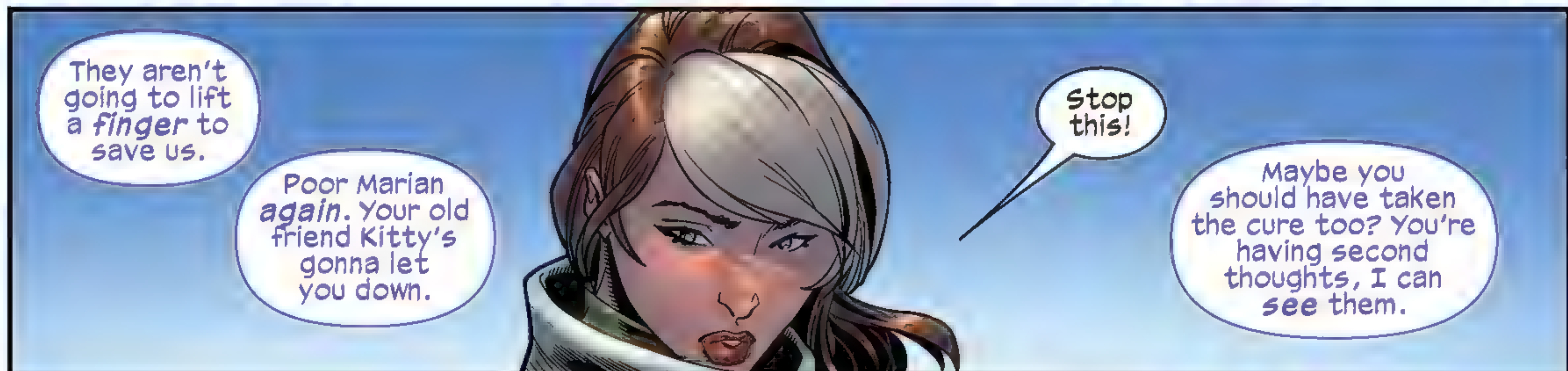
But he took the cure? Aw, poor Marian. No one to touch you now.

Who would *want* to?

I *deserve* to be alone.

The first step is admitting you have a problem.

Enough about your lame boyfriend drama. Let's talk about Kitty Pryde.



Rogue isn't the
only one with
nightmares.

I put down the guns and renounced
violence. It had to be that way. The
mutant resistance was a fight for
freedom, not a fight to conquer.
And we won.

Barely twenty of us remain, so a
peaceful philosophy is the only sane
option. This is what Mach Two fails
to understand. She sees a group
of powerful mutants and wants to
use them to punish humanity.

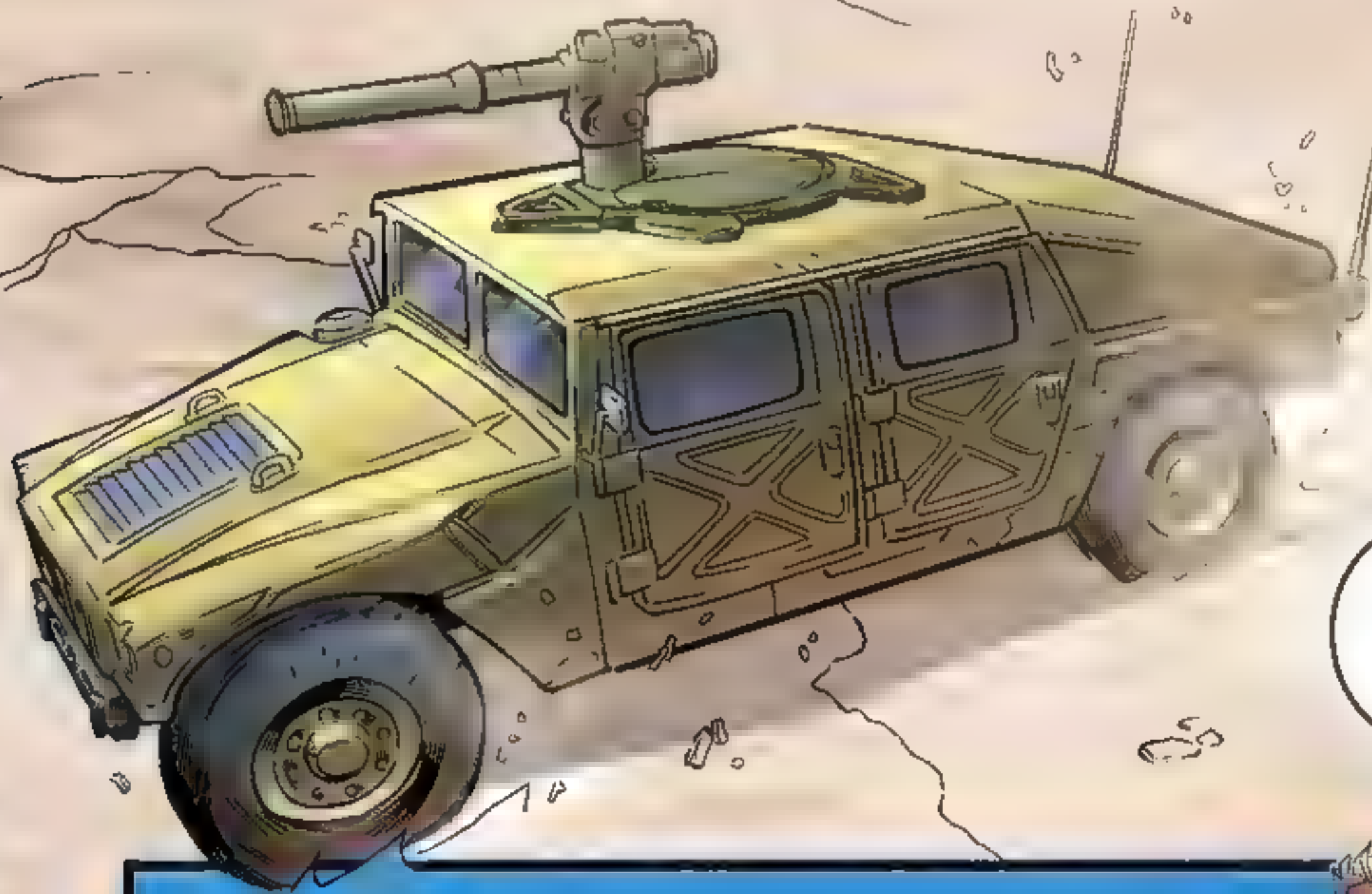
But I have a
better way.

Not to punish, but to
prove our worth. To
justify the violence.

I carry a lot of
guilt and a lot of
responsibility.



DAYS LATER.

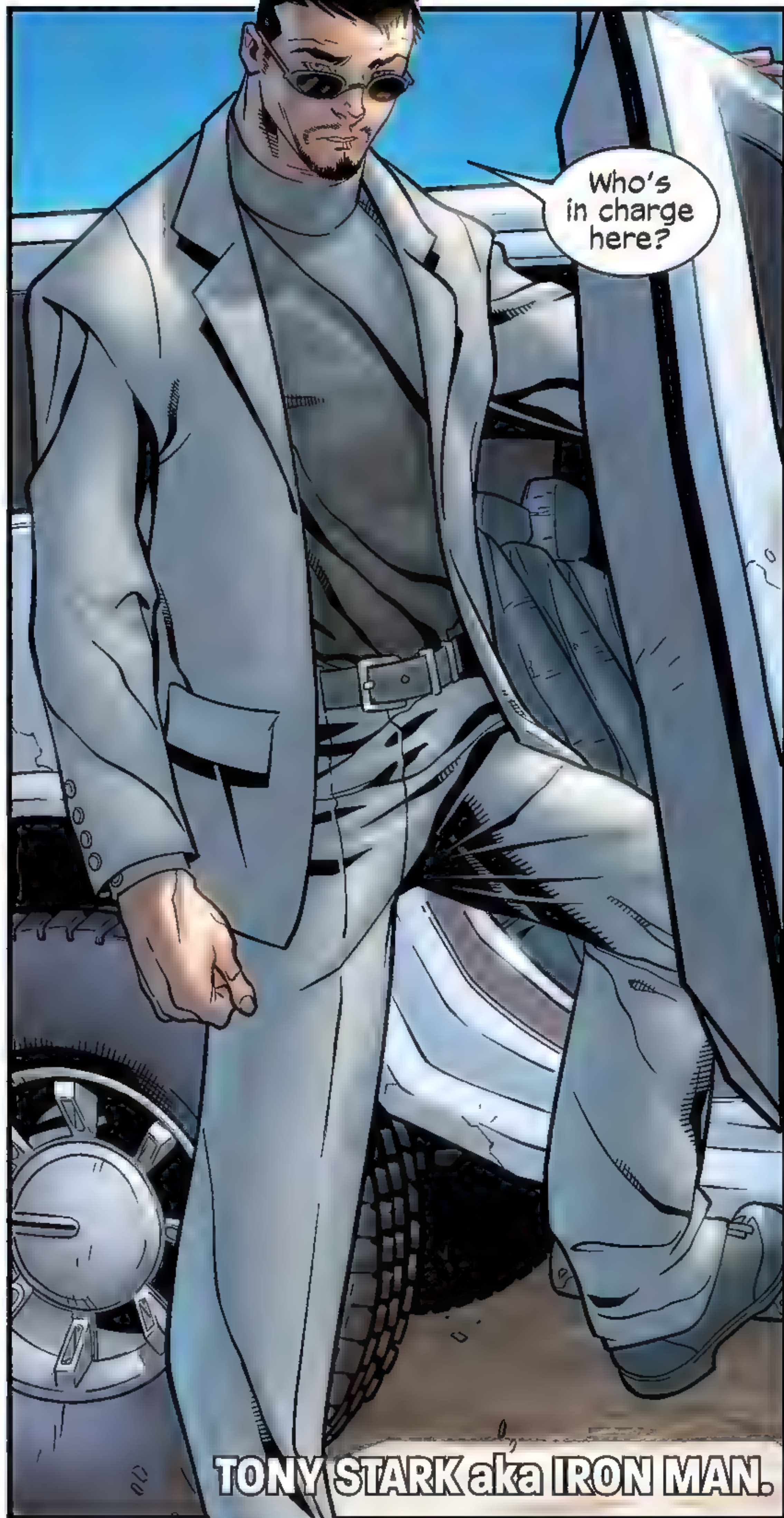


How did you...?

I have *one number* in my phone book.



Luckily *that person* knows this one.



Who's in charge here?

TONY STARK aka IRON MAN.



Kitty Pryde. Welcome to Utopia, Mr. Stark.

Oh, is *that* what this is? I'll have to take your word for it.

So, Ms. Pryde...

...You have something to show me?





Ah.

This is it, then? For all this talk of a super seed, Mr. Blackheath, I expected to find acres of lush gardens. This looks like a second grader's science experiment.

I planted these just five minutes before you arrived.

The same "base" seed into different soil recipes. It's already mutated into four different strains of grain.

Well, *that's* a little more interesting.

You do realize what you're up against, don't you?

Genetically modified seed stock is a lucrative enterprise. Companies spend *billions* developing proprietary strains designed to protect that investment. Developing nations are, in fact, enslaved to a brand for just that reason.

What you have here is a *magic bullet* that could eliminate an entire industry, just like that.

That said, the benefits here are obvious. Distributed correctly, you could quite literally feed the world.

And you would be so rich your offspring wouldn't have to work for a *millennium*.

We want to give it away.

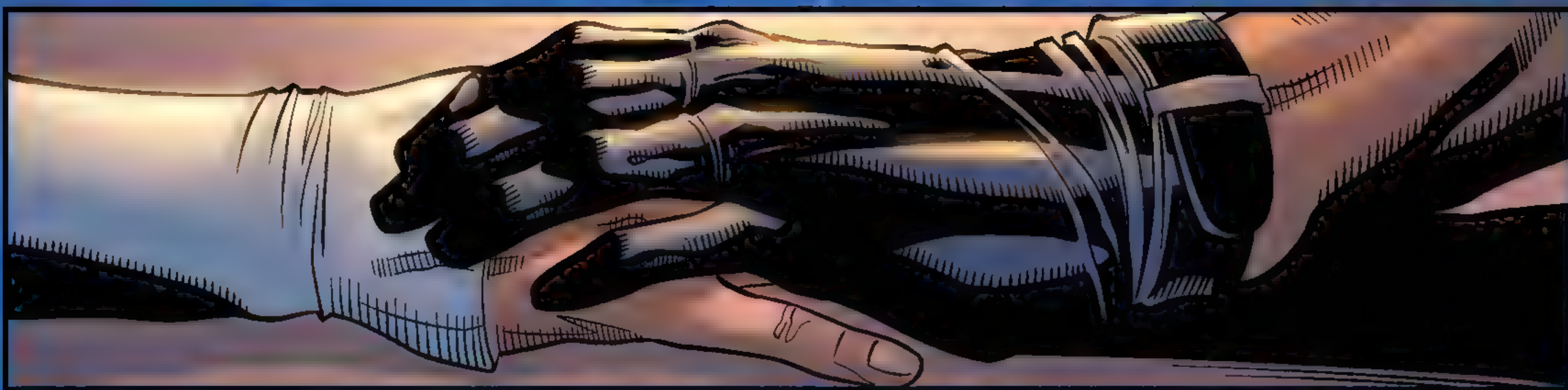




Am I
crazy to do
this?

No crazier
than before, when
you announced we
were all going to the
Southwest to rile up
the Sentinels.

Ha.



Am I
crazy?

Basically,
yeah.

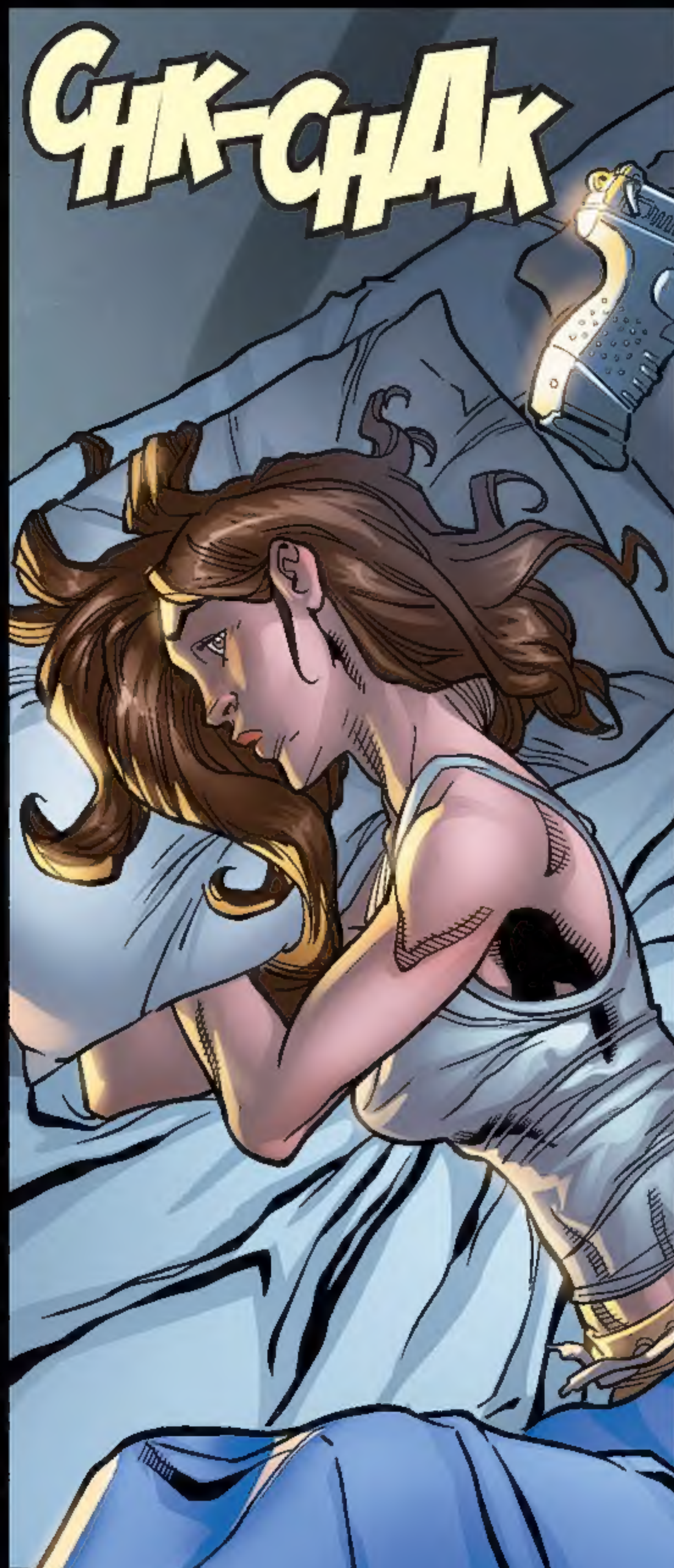
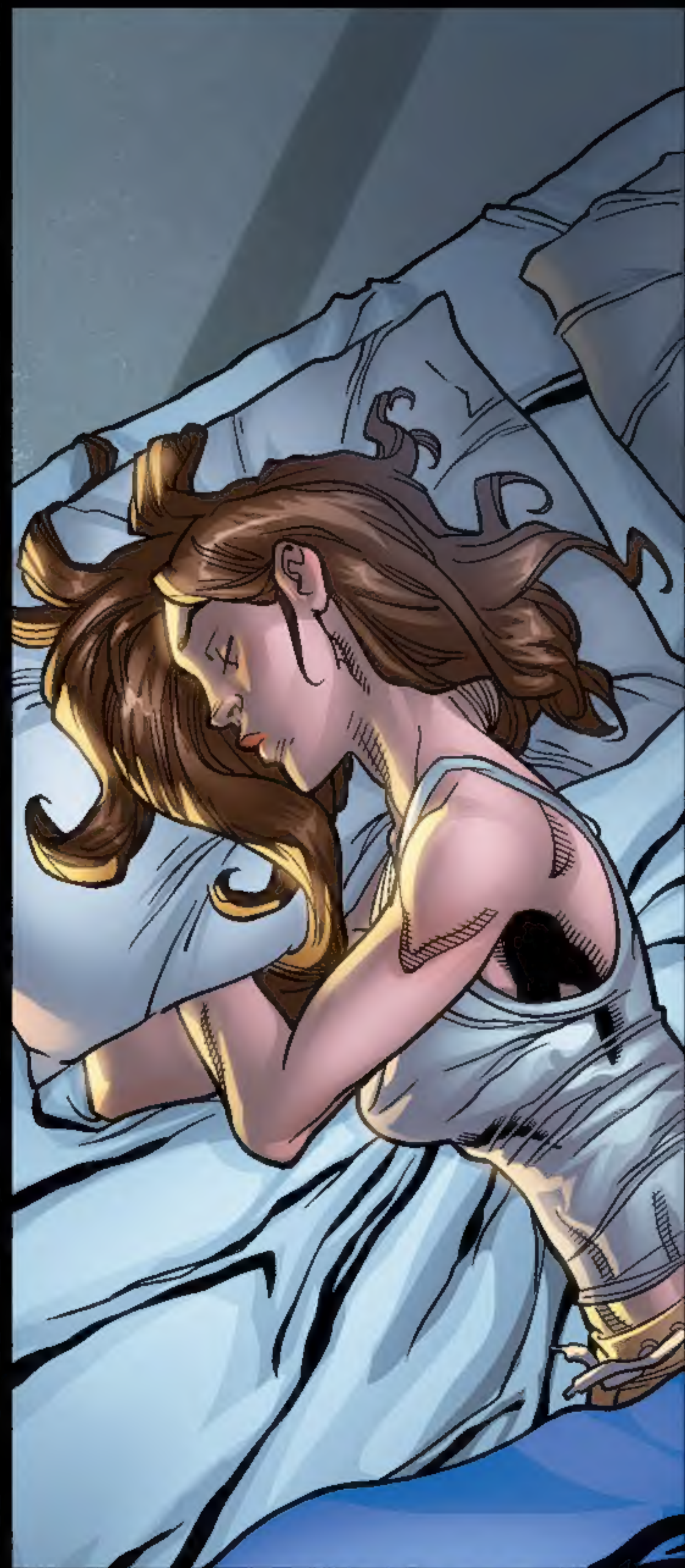
But you've
also had my back
in *everything* since we
left New York, and that's
the sort of thing an armed
revolutionary girl tends
to notice.

I'm about to
get a lot more
negative attention,
you know. Now might
be the perfect time
to find a little
distance...

Or
not.



NIGHTTIME.



...
What are you trying to prove, anyway? Is this just some desperate bid for attention?

You know I'll just phase and the bullet will pass--





NO!

I'm awake!

Hey...
Hey...

What is
it? What's
wrong?

Everything.

TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT:



**ULTIMATE COMICS
ULTIMATES #19
ON SALE NOW!**



**ULTIMATE COMICS
SPIDER-MAN #18
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